

There is no reason to doubt that all small children have this sexual curiosity about the genitals of parents and of other children. I have observed it very many times in children (without taking notes sufficiently exact to quote) from the time they can walk about—e.g. the wish to go into the bathroom or lavatory when the grown-ups are there, or attempts to crawl under a chair occupied by an adult, and to peep up at them—or, later on, more veiled and sidelong looks if an opportunity should seem to occur. The psycho-analysis of all types of adults and children shows this to have been a universal desire in early childhood, even in those in whom sexual curiosity has later been almost completely repressed.

One particular and important phantasy of small children is hinted at in the incident on 4.12.24 (p. 141), when Frank speaks of "the big fat thing on her tummy". From this incident alone we should hardly know what it was he imagined to be there, but from psycho-analytic studies we do know that one or both of two things would be in Frank's mind. Either he was attributing the possession of a phallus to the grown woman, or he was referring to the idea that she had babies inside her (Frank's own mother had been pregnant not so very long previously). Little children do think of their mothers⁷ as containing a large number of children not yet born; they are there hidden away inside, as children, not as mere ova, about which of course they know nothing. This is another unconscious motive for their curiosity, to see how many children there are, and, indeed, to get at them and damage them as rivals who are feared and hated.

In the incident with Dan on 21.9.24 (p. 140), a significant detail is the shifting of attention from the woman in whom he

was really interested to the table legs and underside of the table. In his play with the table, he was magically achieving the success which he was denied in reality; but as this did not satisfy, he returned at every opportunity to the real attack. -

The incident on 19.5.25 (p. 141) is an interesting one, because it shows a piece of behaviour with many complex motives behind it: ¹ In the afternoon, Priscilla washed Dan and then Frank, and took Dan into the lavatory to make water; she undid their trousers for them, and then said, 'Now you have not wet your knickers'; Laurie watching/¹ Priscilla was pretending to be a careful mother to the small boys when she